

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 DODE-00 L-03 RSC-01 DRC-01 /018 W

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R 091146Z MAR 74

FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5633

C O N F I D E N T I A L CAIRO 1151

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ABLD TBIO EG US

SUBJECT: NAMRU-3 POLICY AGREEMENT

REF: STATE 46485

1. USINT HAD INDEED RECEIVED TWO NOTES FROM CULTURAL SECTION OF FOREIGN MINISTRY, ONE IN DECEMBER AND ONE IN JANUARY, ASKING THAT TALKS BE INITIATED TO NEGOTIATE NEW POLICY AGREEMENT. THESE WERE SENT AT BEHEST MINISTER OF HEALTH MAHFOUZ. I HAVE DISCUSSED SUBJECT WITH NAMRU CHIEF, CAPT. SPARKS, WITH A VIEW TO DETERMINING AN APPROPRIATE REPLY.

2. I RECENTLY TALKED PRIVATELY WITH FAHMY ABOUT EGYPTIAN PROPOSAL AND SUGGESTED ON A PERSONAL BASIS THAT REQUEST BE DROPPED FOR THE TIME BEING. NAMRU HAS BEEN HERE FOR 25 YEARS AND ITS RELATIONS WITH EGYPT HAVE BEEN GOOD. THERE SEEMED NO PARTICULAR IMMEDIATE NEED TO RENEGOTIATE OTHER THAN MINISTER'S STRONG VIEW THAT HE WISHES A GREATER VOICE IN NAMRU OPERATIONS. I REMINDED FAHMY THAT WE HAVE VARIOUS OTHER MATTERS OF MORE PRESSING IMPORTANCE THAT OUGHT TO BE HANDLED FIRST. IT SEEMED TO ME, MOREOVER, THAT MAHFOUZ'S CONCERNS COULD PERHAPS BE WORKED OUT INFORMALLY WITHOUT A NEW POLICY AGREEMENT.

3. FAHMY WAS UNAWARE OF CULTURAL SECTION'S NOTES, WHICH I SHOWED HIM. HE AGREED THAT THIS WAS NOT THE TIME TO RAISE THE SUBJECT AND TOLD ME TO IGNORE THE NOTES. HE ALSO SUGGESTED I GET IN TOUCH WITH MAHFOUZ, WITH WHOM HE

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PROMISED TO DISCUSS THE MATTER. IN DOING SO, HOWEVER, HE STRESSED

IMPORTANCE OF TRYING TO WORK OUT INFORMALLY SOME MUTUALLY
ACCEPTABLE ARRANGEMENTS.

4. I TOLD HIM NAMRU CHIEF AND I WERE CERTAINLY WILLING
TO DO EVERYTHING FEASIBLE TO MEET THE MINISTER OF HEALTH'S
WISHES, BUT CONTROL HAS TO BE RETAINED BY US NAVY WHICH
IS FINANCING PROJECT. I EXPECT TO TALK WITH NAMRU CHIEF
ABOUT THIS MATTER AGAIN IN NEXT FEW DAYS AND PLAN TO SEE
MAHFOUZ NEXT WEEK. WILL SEE WHAT CAN BE WORKED OUT WITH MAHFOUZ.

5. I DOUBT THAT EGYPTIAN EMBASSY IN WASHINGTON IS
AWARE OF ANY OF THIS. SUGGEST EGYPTIAN EMBASSY SIMPLY
BE TOLD THAT I HAVE ALREADY DISCUSSED THE MATTER WITH
FAHMY AND WILL ALSO BE DISCUSSING IT WITH THE MINISTER OF
HEALTH. THUS, NO FURTHER ACTION ON EGYPTIAN EMBASSY'S
PART WOULD SEEM TO BE REQUIRED.
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